

Teacher's life stories in different cultural Educational contexts, as a prerequisite for choice of Profession

Juarez Francisco Da Silva, Evelise M L Portilho

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Abstract— *The objective of this article is to identify, using teachers' descriptions of memories in elementary education, the experiences that contributed to their decision to become teachers. Memories were solicited from teachers participating in a continuing education program, who at the time of the study from 2014 to 2016, taught at four institutions in the metropolitan region of Curitiba in the Paraná state of Brazil. Hermeneutic phenomenology served as the basis for interpretation of the memories. The study identified that consciously recognizing inspirational moments in one's personal history allowed for understanding of and a better relationship to the one's work environment.*

Keywords— *Learning, Life story, Teacher, Elementary Education, Hermeneutic Phenomenology.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Currently, the teacher profession assumes more and more importance in the creation of citizens for the social world, requiring ongoing research that provides for continued reflection on the demands of each era in their respective contexts. However, above all, this profession contributes to the formation of individuals with coherent opinions who are capable of consciously recognizing the relations that they establish with their surrounding community.

The research that began this article – Learning and Knowledge in Continuing Education – created a continuing education program for teachers at four learning institutions including: elementary school, high school, early childhood education, and special modality. Participating teachers totaled 45, all of whom teach in the Curitiba metropolitan region of the Paraná state of Brazil. The referenced proposal of continuing education is guided by the necessity to shift away from the education model in which the participants are merely listeners to a model where they participate, and together with their pairs, the teachers of a determined school, discuss, reflect, and propose new ways of practicing such a model.

Therefore, various research instruments were used that favored awareness and self-awareness of pedagogy practice. In recalling the influences that led to participants' choice in becoming a teacher, they were asked to recall memories from their elementary education. This involved

teachers describing their history, highlighting their most important learning moments, and the memories they have kept for personal significance.

The use of the word “choice,” here does not indicate the process of each teacher and whether this choice was intentional or circumstantial, if he or she was directly or circumstantially influenced to become a teacher. The research sought to identify these particular reasons in interpreting the memories. Memories about life stories point to

the practice of constructing and deconstructing the teachers' meanings, through narratives that show changes in the reflective comprehension of their own conceptions, facilitating the creation of an emancipatory consciousness, which can be an effective alternative for teacher education (SAMPAYO et al., 2018, p. 243).

In this case, the use of autobiography narratives presents itself as a methodological option with the purpose of unraveling diverse meanings that constitute a teacher's identity. Thus, for Sampaio et al. (2018), the narrative of memories promote a reflective state in the author, since it

revitalizes one's memories of significant facts that can be reported.

This research about teachers' life stories has the objective to identify indicators that guide the professional choice of becoming an elementary teacher in different cultural educational contexts. The indicators presuppose that one's interpretation of memories about people, lived experiences, and other perspectives all influence one's decision to choose this profession.

II. MEMORIAL AS AUTOBIOGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION

Memorials are texts written in the first person, the same way as letters, confessions, diaries, and memories (Vieira, 2017). This genre of writing about one's self exposes the subject's reasons for its bias and subjectivity. When the individual expresses their subjectivity through experiences, they transmit their knowledge, their dreams, all of the energy of the writer. This goes beyond the written language as some images and symbolic representations cannot be captured into words. According to Bueno et al. (2006), using memorials as narratives written about the life stories of authors, and autobiographical studies, have gained prominence in Brazil as a methodology of scientific investigation in the area of education.

To be a human, to tell your story through memorial, appears to unite and organize the experience in relation to the memories of past events, recreating a path through your life that shows the construction of one's personal and sociocultural reality. Biological processes and sociocultural phenomenon, for Damásio (2018), do not explain the complex social relation with which our mind becomes involved, since there exist codes of conduct that attempt to maintain a homeostatic environment. In general, we are not isolated individuals nor are we in a single place, in any specific moment we are catalyzers of experiences that guide our lives that are also molded by particular circumstances in each era and place.

Narration written as a memorial is a sequence of facts and images transmitted by representations that occurred over a given time period. According to Bruner (1997), it's a set of linguistic structures and psychologies transmitted culturally and historically according to the abilities of each individual. These allow for the comprehension of the dynamics of meaning creation and interpretation of oneself and lived contexts. It is a version of reality, since its acceptance is by convention and not empirical verification and logical precision. As such, Brunner (1997) proposes ten

steps to evaluate a detailed memorial narrative, in no particular order, but recognizing that they all form a system as follows:

- 1 – Narrative diachronicity: involves the exposition of events that occur with the passing of time;
- 2 – Particularity: are specific events that are ostensive references;
- 3 – Intentionally stated bonds: refers to how people act in scenarios and events are pertinent to their respective intentional states;
- 4 – Hermeneutic composition: there is a difference between what is expressed and its possible meaning, highlighting the absence of a single means of determining meaning;
- 5 – Canonicalization and violation: refers to unjustified inclusion of certain events;
- 6 – Referral: acceptance of a narrative cannot depend on its correct reference to reality, since this is evaluated by its likelihood;
- 7 – Generalizability: is the mode of constructing situations as a mental guide;
- 8 – Normativity: the form changes to conform to the moment's concerns and surrounding circumstance;
- 9 – Context sensitivity and negotiability: allows for cultural negotiation, which, when successful, allows for cultural coherence and interdependence;
- 10 – Narrative accession: create something quite varied called "tradition."

The memorial, however, is a narrative capable of evoking, through a succession of facts, a certain real or imaginary world, understood as a scenario in a given time and space invoked and symbolized by the author. That which symbolizes is that which approximates (CAMPBELL, 1997), despite the individual not rationalizing the experience. It is always a relationship established in the form of a metaphoric reality.

The metaphor is a native language of myth and is responsible for the vigor of directing an individual's energy, according to da Silva (2016). It begins with the relation between the depth of the experience and the individual's vocabulary, and in a more contemporary mode, renews the context of the complex unit since what it means to be human is to be in a constant learning dialogue. In the learning process, complementarity over ideal self-education is conceived as a process that establishes itself as a mediation of reality in the function that qualifies it, in a work that evokes the very history of the human being. It is important to consider being a human in its totality. This comes despite the

possible arbitrary moment in which one writes his or her own story in the form of a memorial and thus exposing oneself to the other in an autobiographical communication process through the mobilized conscious through memory of something that left a mark as a result of their life story.

III. METHODOLOGY

This research, which is of a qualitative nature, involved content analysis following the interpretation of hermeneutic phenomenology categories as proposed by Ricoeur (2013). It was done with 45 teachers that work in four different education institutions across elementary, high school, and special education.

Hermeneutic phenomenological epistemology is an area of knowledge that encompasses the phenomenon as it appears, since all evidence for it derives from a dialogical process between the object and the researcher. Hermeneutics interprets the phenomenon as it appears in the analysis, according to Ricoeur (2013), this includes the complete scenario of observation, from the researcher until the object in the respective scenario as well as the result of this relation.

In the schools that participated in the continuing education program and were a part of this research, 12 teachers worked in special education, 33 worked in elementary and high school education institutions. Despite all being located in the Curitiba metropolitan region, they were located in geographically and culturally different contexts. The first school, denominated as A, possesses more than a thousand enrolled students for elementary and high school education, 8 teachers participated from this school in the continuing education program in 2014. The second school (school D) had 10 elementary school teachers participate in the continuing education program in 2014. The third school, which we call H, which receives students for infantile education, special modality, had 12 professors participate in the continuing education program in 2015. The fourth school, denominated R, with more than 700 students enrolled in elementary education had 15 teachers participate in the continuing education program in 2016.

The Continuing Education program offered by the Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Paraná-PUCPR is carried out in each education institution through seven meetings, on different days, lasting two hours each. The structure of the meetings conforms to the following steps: 1) Review of the previous task; 2) group dynamic; 3) Presentation of the day's theme via reference and content review; conversation circle; presentation of the week's task, and metacognitive evaluation.

Metacognitive evaluation is an instrument that the participating teacher of the day's activity offers through written observations of the environment, the content, group activities, and of him or herself in a reflective process. According to Flavel (1971, apud Portilho, 2011, p.106), the name is attributed to knowledge that someone has about their own cognitive processes, or any other subject related to them.

In the first meeting, the task solicited from the teachers was the written autobiographical narrative termed memorial, which deals with the written memories that the person has about the facts of their life that contributed to their decision to become a teacher. The task was worded as such, "You will write a narrative telling your professional history in such a manner as to highlight the most important learning moments that you have lived (family, friends, school – from infantile education through until your college graduation and first professional experiences), focusing on those that contributed to the education of the professional that you are today."

For the interpretation of the memories, four readings were performed for each one, in alphabetical order ascending one day and descending on the next with a three-day interval between each reading. The readings were always conducted at the same time of day: early in the morning, in a state of low-stress in order to facilitate the supposed distancing recommended by the chosen methodology. This also helped to capture the phenomenon of the relation established between the memorial and the researcher. With the readings of the memorials, the researchers established the possible and pertinent relations among the preformed skills, the emotions, and habits written in the memorials as well as all the categories suggested by hermeneutic interpretation.

The hermeneutic phenomenology, according to the presuppositions of Ricoeur (2013), served as the basis for interpretation of the memories, considering what was clear in the interpretation, in the text, and at the heart of the historicity experienced by the teachers. There are five previously established categories to guide this process, they are:

1) The effectiveness of language as discourse – something happens when someone speaks or writes, and this is necessary to consider when dealing with a distinction that has a temporal origin and manifests itself in the present. This involves the quantity of data offered to the reader such as, incomplete phrases or lack of words, which do not allow for a more detailed observation. It also involves the richness of details or lack thereof in a story of lived experiences.

2) The discourse as work – formed by the composition of the genre, the individual's style that reveals the nature and composition of the work. Here transparency and disposition of the author in telling significant experiences recovered by memory at the moment of writing and if the discourse describes situations capable of forming a complete story.

3) The relationship between speech and writing – is the result of the relationship that is established between the written text and reading as a speech, producing an autonomy in interpretation with meaning that does not reduce, but as observation of the author's intentional perspective. With group reading it is possible to identify the environmental culture, since the place of speech of each author announces a specific mode, with or without the flexibility to transpose.

4) The world of the text – it is the comprehension or capture of a written objective expression and is accessible through the structure of the written work as a reference to the world of the author taken to its most extreme conditions. In the world of the text, the reported experiences announce the manner in which the author is directly related to what is reported, i.e., how he or she perceives this relationship and the intensity with which the reported experience means in some aspect.

5) Comprehension before the work – this deals with what the text offers as a mediator of the own reflections of the reader, so that he or she understands themselves in the face of the provocations of the work, since it is inherently a subjective undertaking. This is an observation that reveals to the reader what attracted his or her attention for different reasons when reading the text, since it is where the experiences reported in the text are combined with previous observations.

After all of the meetings were done in each school, the research group returned to the respective schools for the meeting termed "Returning," in which, in addition to the presentation of the results, there was a discussion about future referrals. The research counted on the approval of the Ethics in Research with Human Beings Committee in Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Paraná (CAAE nº 03851312.1.0000.0020).

IV. DESCRIPTION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS

In each teacher's narrative it was possible to observe their respective life story, as solicited, for the construction of the memorial. The interpretation of this research tool followed the categories previously established

by the hermeneutic phenomenology of Ricoeur (2013), described in the methodology section.

Category 1 – The effectiveness of language as discourse: considers the quantity of revealed information that are described. The teachers of school H were found to not have written the age or in which life moments some experiences occurred. At this school, all of the participating teachers were female, the memorials were written weekly, between two and twelve lines. There were not many details, and motivation for choosing to become a teacher was quoted in short sentences, as was the case of the teacher here denominated as R, "I chose to become a teacher out of the love of conveying what I know to others."

Of the ten teachers of school D, three of them were male and seven were female, only one teacher wrote their age. In the memorials of the nine teachers, some wrote about experiences from childhood up until adulthood, going over some moments that considerably contributed to the choice of the profession. All ten teachers wrote in an objective manner about their most important moments for choosing the profession. The teacher, denominated P wrote, "At 5 years old, I received a chalkboard, a piece of chalk and an eraser, my most meaningful present. Everyday I would repeat the lessons to my sister and dolls."

At the school identified as A, among the eight teachers that participated in the program, two were male. At this school, the reports were more detailed with age information estimated for when the significant events occurred from childhood to their college such as for teacher L, "My school life began early in a nursery, [...] I enrolled in college and before I finished, I began tutoring."

In the other school, termed R, all teachers were female. The reports were detailed about the period at which they began teaching and also included experiences about their current jobs. Teacher D described how her professional life began in childhood, "Daughter of divorced parents, my mom worked as a housekeeper [...] at 12 years old I already reconciled to work as a nanny and a housekeeper. At 15, I was already studying at night and working all day long as a receptionist. I entered the municipal network and await the result of a public entrance exam."

Three schools, R, A, and D exhibited this category. The teachers of these schools demonstrated this by reporting on the local culture where they lived their first experiences. They dynamically reflect upon that which they write via complementary phrases and explanations. In the case of school H, the language as discourse category appears distant or appears separately from the author and reader. This means

that in this school the teachers in question do not demonstrate clearly the language of a respective culture nor seem to present a language that they identify with the profession. This is interpreted as teachers attempting to acquire a language that does not represent them, and they have difficulties in doing so, but the reasons for this were not identified.

Category 2 – Discourse as work: this category identifies the use of words and phrases that show the differences in distant regional cultures due to the way they write. It also accomplishes this from the relative disregard for conjunctions between phrases and punctuation as prescribed by the orthographic norm. This lack of concern could result from the emotions generated by remembering the facts of his or her life without a care for cultural norms.

In the school denominated A, among the eight teachers that turned in the memorial task, five admitted that they had not planned to become teachers, but in one way or another, they did. Teacher P related their experience, “An old colleague invited me to teach, I was a little reluctant, but due to their persistence I ended up accepting.”

For the teachers at school R, this category was evident the moment that the author faced a challenge in life, supposedly also being there in all of the previous experiences leading up to becoming a teacher. Teacher L described this as, “when I decided to do pedagogy, I heard many competent people say that it was college for those who did not know what to do. I like what I do, despite the many problems that happen day to day.”

Apparently, the memorials from school H were written and turned in without any review of the text. In some cases even it was not possible to identify the level of importance of some experiences in the lives of the teachers. This was due to the fact that they did not write about situations in their lives, despite vaguely mentioning one or more experiences that seemed incomplete or were not clearly identified. Such memories were made up of short phrases negating the possibility to visualize more than one scene of the reported experience. This way of writing also demonstrated the low motivation of the teacher to reflect, and consequently, compromised their professional improvement since the memorial sought to redeem their work related experiences. Teacher L, for example, reported “[...] that it was when I met my brother’s teacher, I left my classroom. I really wanted her to be my teacher, afterward I began to play at home.”

At school D, the memorials evidenced situations associated with emotional memories. It seems that these

teachers were motivated to write about their past experiences and associating them with the moment in which they wrote, allowing the reader a fuller interpretation. Teacher C wrote, “Every time I return as a student, I improve my relationships as teacher and colleague, this is why I always strive for new knowledge.

The teachers demonstrate discourse as work by the way they interpret their particular experiences. The described scenarios, associated with the emotion of the memory and the manner in which they are described indicates that the teachers were motivated to join the profession by concerns and motivation, not as a result of stagnation or apathy. They appear to be involved in and established in the subjects of the profession.

Category 3 – The relationship between speech and writing: this relationship is apparently clear and was found in all schools. This is due to the fact that it promotes, in the observer, a sense of understanding of the writer’s place of the memorials. At school A, the reports indicate very different ways of writing about similar experiences. Still, it also reveals that the respective experiences come from teachers with large differences in behavior, given how they relate to a situation, even though they work in the same school. For example, teacher M reported that they consider themselves a good professional with a sense of humor and that they seek different forms of evaluation in order to help the students in areas in which they struggle, but does not identify their educational background. Their colleague, teacher S, described only the programs and years they finished without contextualizing their experiences as was solicited, again highlighting the different means of discourse. In interpreting the intentionality of these two teachers, one notes that the one deals with how they deals with others, without describing one’s educational background, while the other only reports their educational background, without outlining the way they deal with others, in this case, their students. The life experiences in this school, as written examples, seem to form an environment that is conducive to the diversity of attitudes and spontaneity to deal with others without generating large conflicts, even though it had the most dissimilar people.

The teachers of school H showed a certain distance from what is possible or viable for the profession. This is especially the case given that they did not show clear purposes and ways of writing their respective commitments with a tendency towards the improbable. It seems that commitment is so encompassing that it is unlikely to be accomplished. This is shown by teacher C who wrote that “[...] what brought me to choose the teaching profession was

my desire to change some things that bothers. I believe that the teacher is responsible for the transformation of a nation [...].”

In the group of teachers at school R, this relationship between speech and writing conforms to the hermeneutic phenomenology categories. Phrases were described that expressed the happiness in choosing the profession, especially because they had opportunities and experiences in other professions that allowed them to make personal comparisons. Common phrases in these memorials were “[...] the years passed and after ten years I participated in another entrance exam to be a teacher where I teach until today and I am very happy.”

At school D, the intentionality of the teachers was evident. Their writings provoked in the reader the possibility of interpreting the teachers as imbued with a sense of future motivation. This was manifest in the case of teacher V, “[...] I have been in the profession for thirteen years and nearing retirement. I love to give classes, but I do not feel fulfilled in the face of the problems and challenges the education system faces at the moment, there are not reliable or consistent solutions [...]. Despite everything, I am happy, and I do what I can and what is possible.”

In this category, the teachers at the schools A, D, and R demonstrate autonomy as they can observe their professional horizons, since they can glimpse their emotions in the profession and in what they believe as subject of their own history. The teachers at school H also possess, in a certain way, the motivation to exercise the profession, even though they do not make it clear to the reader how they intend to do so, but the text is interpreted as pronouncing a special intentionality in what they produce in their work.

Category 4 – The world of the text: the category that seeks to identify which stimulus the teacher considers in their life experience to be that which motivated them to choose the profession. It is also concerned with the teacher’s perception of him or herself in their current work condition. This is the case of the teachers at school H that showed to be complete professionals willing to do the task without many questions or demands for improvements. They seem to be satisfied or comfortable in the manner in which they do their work. As teacher M reports, “[...] I chose to be a teacher because I like to learn.”

For other reasons, the teachers at school R expressed their distresses and constantly suggested improvements. These teachers began their professional careers elsewhere. The same temperament to criticize that generates some work conflicts also seems to show a high

level of dedication to the profession and they had certainty in why they choose the job. Teacher S reports that “[...] I am fully convinced that my profession is everything I dreamed of; we face arduous challenges in daily life [...], I can say that I live for love and tomorrow I will feel fulfilled when, in fact, they realize the true value of the professional that we are and still can be.”

In the memorials of school A, regarding this category, there was apparently not much willingness on the part of teachers to improve. Even though some expressed discontent, they were not in the mood to produce more and demand improvements in themselves or their work environment. This is described by teacher E, “[...] I dreamed of a public job, I never thought of teaching. I keep studying because I know knowledge is a horizon.”

At school D, the teachers reported the life experiences in which they chose the profession. They also reflected on experiences that gave them new meaning. Teacher R writes “[...] an intense and productive period. The [university] transformed me into a teacher excited about the opportunity to teach. The contact with some professors was definitive for my education and made me realize the need for constant improvement.”

In the world of the text, the teachers reported the influences of their respective teachers and professors throughout their lives, especially in childhood. They also reported other stimuli such as their parents, their friends, and the various experiences that, in some way, led them to choose teaching. They widely reported that some experiences were significant and positive, even unpleasant ones, since these experiences served to reorient something in their lives. In some way, they chose the profession in order to do it differently than they had experienced. These experiences, interpreted as indicators of looking at the profession of teaching, drew the attention of these people who are capable of transforming a difficulty into motivation.

Category 5 – Comprehension before the work: the memorials of school R offered reports of experiences that indicated major efforts by the teachers in choosing and continuing in the profession. As observed in the report of teacher D, “[...] I opted to be a sewer for the first 40 years, but always with a desire to teach as a source of solidarity, not as a profession, but at 50 I graduated in Pedagogy [...].” The statement by teacher K, “[...] I was brought up by my grandmother and when she became sick and passed away, I missed my classes at school X, ... I was in a different place, with no support, and with a huge hole in my heart ... but I finished the program I was doing [...].” These were some of

the difficulties that these teachers experienced in their upbringing with the possibility of choosing other professions with which they were acquainted. However, it is as teachers that they recognize the challenges ahead of them, even when they do not know how to confront them, but they describe themselves as satisfied and always looking to improve.

The participants at school H demonstrated an emotional distance in the continuing education program, since their reports about their childhood and reasons for choosing teaching were generic and short. This can be observed in teacher I, “[...] I chose to become a teacher from an early age, I played with my sister and brothers when I was a kid.” Another teacher, denominated E wrote, “[...] to be a teacher does not mean that only you teach, nor should it be this way! [...]” In a certain way the group of teachers were not available for the exercises of a deeper professional reflection, or they had difficulties in expressing their personal experiences naturally to others not from their daily lives.

In the memorials of the teachers from school A it can be seen that they are professionals in a working environment, some clearly defined in the profession and others passively dealing with the day-to-day. Apparently, there seems to be a division in the group of teachers between those dedicated to the profession and those there by other circumstances. This was described by teacher G, “[...] I did not intend to be a teacher, since I did not believe I was qualified and prepared, but some life events led me to teaching [...]” The teacher termed V wrote that their descriptive memorial had the objective to present the academic and professional trajectory up until to the present, and wrote about their programs, dates, and institutions where they had studied. Another teacher reported about their life background that led up to them achieving their professional goal and highlighted, “I feel proud of myself for navigating all the development phases of our children [...] I am a teacher!” Another teacher was thankful for the opportunities they had in life, despite the difficulties in constructing their professional career, “I thank all the people that contributed to my education and believed that even with family problems it is possible to win.” The difference in the way they describe the reasons for choosing the profession and their level of satisfaction can lead to difficulties in fostering the motivation necessary to improve the group’s environment. Still, this group wrote extensively about their life experiences, highlighted the important moments, and the influences that led them to choose this profession.

At school D the memorials offered the reader the experience to understand before the work and also indicated

that the teachers did this exercise before writing the texts. This is captured by teacher R, “[...] I opted to study a language program. A bit of influence from my mom as well as perceiving a personal and professional appeal in education.” Another teacher termed R highlighted that “[...] I really liked the school, but I could not attend very often, I depended a lot on the work of my mother [...]. When I could go, I was lent a notebook, I worked hard, and always got good grades. For this, first I received a prize called, ‘Smooth Path Primer’ and for reading without stuttering I received a book from the teacher called ‘The Circus’. Of all the good memories I have, this was what determined my passion for reading and stayed with me for the rest of my life.” In this school, the memorials report many experiences leading up to the choice of teaching, highlighting that they understand the reason for this choice and cause the reader to reflect on the subjectivity of the choices.

For this category the memorials offer many experiences that clearly led to the teachers’ choices to join the profession, it is possible to interpret a number of life events that led to this choice. Still, it is also clear that other teachers do not know why they chose this profession nor believe the profession is ideal for them or knowing how to modify this belief.

United all the hermeneutic phenomenological categories in each of the four schools, utilizing the memorials written by the teachers, the following interpretations become clear. School H demonstrates a language that indicates a group of teachers with similar purposes and apparently with objectives outside of the profession. The texts are not clear enough and indicate that they are thinking of modifying what is not within the purview of the school, using a quick, shallow description of subjective aspirations that are too broad and beyond the environment in which they operate. The reflections on their educative environment do not appear in the memorials and cause discomfort to the reader, leaving unclear what conclusions to draw about the group. It is possible that these teachers did this work in a mechanical way without reflecting about possible improvements. It is also possible to interpret that the group puts itself at the disposition of some other professional and doing so does not seem to cause anxiety or estrangement, nor is it questioned. What can be concluded from the group of teachers, as reported by their experiences, is that they suffered in the past. However, their current situation does not compare in terms of difficulty to that which they have already lived.

The memorials of school D are described in such as detail that the reader can visualize and imagine complete

experiences in order to understand the author. The reports show the individuality of each author and their respective relationships with the work environment. The reports form a set of reflections showing how the teachers' perceive the development process beginning from childhood up until the current moment in the profession. They appear to be a group that reflects on their memories as an aid to not give up easily on the challenges, and it seems, they cannot development more due to lack of institutional or governmental support. It appears they do not know how to confront some circumstances arising from the education policy system. They are able to criticize but cannot offer solutions.

The group of teachers from school A suggest, through the interpretation of the memorials, that each teacher possess a personal dynamic that they do not expose to the group. This causes distancing and passivity in the actions of all. Moreover, they try to do their jobs independently, but normally do not tend to confront one another. This can be interpreted as a group that does not reflect very much and has little interaction in trying to improve things, but this does not generate conflict among the members. The memorial slogan caused some disquiet among the majority of the teachers, that tried to describe experiences among themselves that did not match. This could mean that some of the facts did not occur. The group also showed little appetite to dedicate themselves to the task, especially those that had not desired to be teachers.

In school R, the group of teachers that responded to the memorial showed a large critical capacity towards their work environment, but they tried to resolve everything within their group. Apparently, the other teachers that were not in the continuing education program and did not participate are apathetic and distant from the participating group. This leaves the impression that there are two groups in the same school and that one denominates as it has previous work experiences before becoming teachers. The reports are ample and deep, showing the complete content of some experiences, especially concerning those that led to the choice of becoming a teacher. From this group, one of the main facts that emerges is how they are thankful in their writings for everything that they have experienced, which in one way or another, contributed to their professional choice.

This research shows, via the hermeneutic means of interpreting the memorials, that in general the education of a person is not an isolated process. Rather, it occurs within an objective space, and through subjective choices, the influence of others, the circumstances that present themselves, in some manner lead to a person's decision.

V. CONCLUSIONS

From the readings of the memorials, it is possible to confirm that the life stories of professors is very relevant to the study of the profession, since these experiences are the foundation of the professional who then directly educates other professionals. Although, according to Rego (2014), memorials have not been sufficiently researched in education, despite being a genre of writing often solicited in selection processes or for career advancement.

The large social relevance of the teaching profession demands that more research be done to increase the preparation process, with all of its tangible and intangible demands that make up a professional. This is the case whether in continuing education of the teacher, as an end in itself, or connecting pertinent knowledge available for the teaching context.

As Sampaio et al. (2018) affirms, current studies point to the fact that using memorials in teacher education promotes interaction between the teacher and their work environment. In order to write a memorial it is necessary to find the words that fit the personal vocabulary, that itself was created during the experiences. Yet, it is necessary to have a willingness to remember personal experiences and relay this to the reader.

When reading memorials, it is not possible to clearly identify how the writer reflects and is self-aware; however, according to Ricoeur (2013), a human being can know him or herself indirectly in terms of the objective world and his or her actions in it. The memorials point to the necessity of teacher participation in continuing education programs in such a way as to optimize reflections about one's actions, in one's work with their peers, aiming to improve and transform one's pedagogic practices.

Pedagogical practice is directly dependent on what we are as a person (NÓVOA, 2013, p. 15). That is why the educator's education, according to the epistemologies that underlie the conclusions presented here, entails the impossibility of separating the personal self from the professional self.

The knowledge of history and the knowledge of oneself as an individual who acts in a profession of connection between what one learns, the object one learns and the one who learns while transmitting knowledge, seem like necessary characteristics for the execution of a teacher's work. It is the connector, someone who constantly reconnects the present while focused on the future, paying attention to those acquired past experiences. The principle of reconnection, for Morin (2008), is the necessary

consideration to integrate a knowledge that should not be isolated from its object nor hide its essential character, as information acquires meaning in through knowledge. It is an event that acquires meaning in the historical conditions in which it appears and helps integrate phenomenon.

The interpretation of the memorials, according to the hermeneutic phenomenology, aptly fulfills the general objective of this scientific exercise and confirms that this epistemology can offer consistent elements or categories to interpret the reports. Even considering that human life shows itself differently to each person, the perspective of a professional seems to underlie that each person can understand a life story. Even so, each person's revelations follow their life experiences, and this complex perspective develops next to each individual's background, consequently, it reveals itself in the choice and exercise of one's profession.

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